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INFO RUCNIAD/IGAD COLLECTIVE
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RHMFISS/CJTF HOA
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 0109
RUEHRN/USMISSION UN ROME
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 0295
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS 0115
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC 0278

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 KHARTOUM 001289

AIDAC

DEPT FOR AF/SPG, S/CRS, PRM, AF SE WILLIAMSON
NSC FOR PMARCHAM, MMAGAN, BPITTMAN, CHUDSON
ADDIS ABABA ALSO FOR USAU
DEPT PLS PASS USAID FOR AFR/SP, USAID/W DCHA SUDAN
NAIROBI FOR USAID/DCHA/OFDA, USAID/REDSO, AND FAS
GENEVA FOR NKYLOH
NAIROBI FOR SFO
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TAGS: [ASEC](#) [EAID](#) [PREF](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [SOCI](#) [UN](#) [SU](#)
SUBJECT: FIGHTING IN KALMA CAMP, SOUTH DARFUR

REF: A) KHARTOUM 1274

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SUMMARY

¶1. (SBU) On August 25, USAID staff received reports of fighting and casualties in Kalma internally displaced person (IDP) camp, South Darfur. As of 1100 hours, implementing partners and the UN-African Union Hybrid Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) reported ongoing fighting, fires, and undetermined casualties and deaths. To date, UNAMID and local leaders have provided contradictory accounts of the events and lead up to the fighting. Post continues to monitor the situation and will provide updates as more information is available.

THE CURRENT SITUATION IN KALMA

¶2. (SBU) According to UNAMID, early on August 25, government forces in 30 vehicles surrounded Kalma camp in preparation for a weapons search and seizure of the camp area. During the impending weapons raid, resident IDPs resisted, and the government forces reportedly began firing randomly on the camp residents. As of 1130 hours, UNAMID indicated that fighting was ongoing and there were an undetermined number of casualties. UNAMID has scheduled an August 26 meeting with the South Darfur Wali (governor) to discuss the situation and the latest fighting, which is a violation of the previous agreement with the wali.

¶3. (SBU) UNAMID reported that government forces detained Kalma camp's sheikhs (community leaders) during the week of August 18. (NOTE: Although the cause and duration of detainment remain unclear, the UNAMID staff member posits that the two incidents are related. END NOTE.) According to UNAMID, SAF notified UNAMID of the impending plans for a weapons raid; however, UNAMID did not respond and was

not present in the camp at the time of the raid. (NOTE: The UNAMID staffer said that UNAMID did not have enough time to prepare, and did not want to be identified with government forces. END NOTE).

14. (U) According to international news media, community leaders contradict UNAMID's account of the event, and indicate that more than 100 vehicles surrounded the camp on August 25 at 0500 hours and began firing in an attempt to clear out camp residents. The community leaders report at least 18 deaths, many injuries, houses on fire, and call upon UNAMID to act on its mandate to protect the IDPs.

15. (SBU) Salah Muhammad Fadul, a sultan of the Fur and resident of Nyala in South Darfur, told poloff by phone that the confrontation actually started on August 24, when a Central Reserve Force police unit surrounded Kalma camp, allegedly intending to conduct a weapons search in the camp. According to Fadul, on the morning of August 25, an IDP within the camp fired on the force, igniting the fighting between the police and IDPs. Fadul stated that although the number of dead and wounded is impossible to confirm at this early stage, he has heard reports ranging from 20 to 90 deaths among the IDP population. (NOTE: Separately, a member of SLA/Abdul Wahid (SLA/AW) contacted poloff on August 25 and claimed that "intense fighting" in Kalma camp resulted in more than 300 dead IDPs. END NOTE.) Fadul stated that he has offered to serve as a mediator between the IDPs and the government, as Kalma's IDPs are refusing to talk directly to the police force. Fadul requested immediate international medical assistance for the wounded.

16. (SBU) On August 25, USAID's implementing partner International Rescue Committee (IRC) reported the arrival of approximately 20 wounded civilians at IRC clinics. According to USAID's implementing partner World Vision International (WVI) the UN has confirmed that the fighting killed more than 50 camp residents. As of 1130 hours,

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SAF forces were trying to forcibly remove the dead from the camp. In addition, WVI received reports that several IDP homes and the WVI receiving shelter for food distribution burned down during the firefight.

17. (SBU) A/CDA raised the issue with MFA U/S Mutriff Siddiq during a meeting August 25, 2008. Siddiq said he had not yet heard about the incident, but promised to look into it.

Background

18. (U) Kalma camp is home to approximately 90,000 IDPs. On July 31, a UNAMID team visited Kalma camp to investigate reports of a Government of National Unity (GNU) weapons raid in the camp. According to IDP leaders, three to five GNU land cruisers with mounted machine guns entered Kalma camp on July 28. UN added that Sudanese government officials confirmed the raid on Kalma camp and reported that GNU forces seized weapons from IDPs in the camp, a statement that the IDP leaders denied. At the time of the incident, community leaders indicated that the government forces did not harm or arrest any IDPs. Aid workers and IDP leaders expressed concern that the GNU raid is part of a strategy to close down Kalma camp and split up the IDP population. In late 2007, GNU forces planned to divide Kalma camp into nine smaller camps. According to non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the plan would have separated IDPs along ethnic lines and moved IDPs closer to areas of origin. Humanitarian agencies condemn forced relocations and GNU pressure on IDPs to return to places of origin. In October 2007, approximately 30,000 of the 90,000 total IDPs fled Kalma camp in response to politically motivated inter-ethnic fighting. In November 2007, IDPs built road blocks to obstruct GNU disarmament campaigns in the camp.

COMMENT

19. (SBU) Although it is essential that UNAMID meet with the South

Darfur Wali, we are not hopeful that the meeting will produce any result. The Wali has been a continued source of difficulty to the UN and NGOs, and a source of irritation to the regime in Khartoum, due to his inability to be easily controlled and his tendency to be erratic in his governing style. It is still unclear whether this morning's incident was a result of the Wali acting independently of Khartoum, or if it represents the Wali's implementation of an order that passed down from Khartoum. We suspect the former rather than the latter given recent history, the Wali's problematic behavior, and the regime's current interest in showing progress in Darfur.

ASQUINO